



Thousands Protest NATO at Chicago Summit

Some 5,000 mostly young people marched in Chicago May 20 demanding an end to the war in Afghanistan and U.S. withdrawal from NATO, a cold war leftover that is now being turned into a global military alliance.

In a riveting ceremony, dozens of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans (*above*) returned their medals, apologizing to the people of those countries for destroying their homelands and speaking in anger and shame of their feelings of betrayal by the U.S. government and armed forces.

Peace Action cosponsored a counter-summit, which drew 300 activists May 18-19 for intensive antiwar planning meetings.

Budget for All Referendum!

Massachusetts Peace Action and a community-labor-peace alliance are working to put this non-binding referendum question on the November ballot in districts across Massachusetts:

Shall the state Representative (or Senator) from this district be instructed to vote in favor of a resolution calling upon the Congress and the President to:

1. *Prevent cuts to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and Veterans benefits, or to housing, food and unemployment assistance;*
2. *Create and protect jobs by investing in manufacturing, schools, housing, renewable energy, transportation and other public services;*
3. *Provide new revenues for these purposes and to reduce the long-term federal deficit by closing corporate tax loopholes, ending offshore tax havens, and raising taxes on incomes over \$250,000; and*
4. *Redirect military spending to these domestic needs by reducing the military budget, ending the war in Afghanistan and bringing U.S. troops home safely now.*

To put the B4A on the ballot, volunteers are needed to gather at least 200 signatures by July 3 per state representative district. Sign up now at masspeaceaction.org and learn more about the campaign at budget4allmass.org.

U.S.-Iran Confrontation Threatens New Mideast War

The confrontation between the U.S. and Iran is reaching a dangerous point, yet we are encouraged by the resumption of P5+1 talks in Istanbul and upcoming talks in Baghdad and by President Jimmy Carter's call for no war on Iran.

The U.S. with its aircraft carriers, and Israel, have nuclear weapons in the Middle East. Iran has none, and all U.S. intelligence agencies concur that Iran has no nuclear weapons program. War threats and punishing sanctions which amount to economic warfare will do more harm than good.

Peace Action calls for a diplomatic solution, not military action. Diplomacy should not only address nuclear issues but all differences between the U.S. and Iran.

Americans don't want another war and they are seeking alternative solutions. Peace Action is working to inform the public of other options, the ineffectiveness of war, and to remind people of the costs of war in lives and dollars.

To change public opinion, Peace Action and 4 other peace organizations put 200 ads like the one shown below on MBTA subway cars and buses. The ads ran from mid-March to mid-April and were made possible by over 70 donors who made mostly small contributions on Peace Action's website.


SAY NO TO ANOTHER MIDDLE EAST WAR



DIPLOMACY – NOT WAR – WITH IRAN
Just as we were misled into a disastrous war in Iraq, some are now pressing for an attack on Iran. But the only nuclear weapons in the Middle East belong to the US and Israel. US intelligence agencies say Iran does not have an active nuclear weapons program.

CAN WE AFFORD ANOTHER WAR?
The Iraq war cost \$4 trillion or more; it took 4,400 US lives and many thousands of Iraqi lives. Iran is three times the size of Iraq. Shouldn't we spend our tax dollars on jobs, schools, transportation and other human needs – instead of another war?

MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
TELL PRESIDENT OBAMA HOW YOU FEEL
no-war-with-iran.com



Friends Committee on National Legislation photo (fnci.org)
Massachusetts Peace Action. Donor: People for Peace, Newton Dialogues on Peace & War, United for Justice with Peace, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom • www.masspeaceaction.org • 617-354-2169

Peace Action is supporting the Iran Pledge of Resistance, which commits signers to demonstrate peacefully--or for some, to engage in nonviolent civil disobedience--in the event of military action against Iran. Over 4000 have signed nationally, including 450 in Eastern Massachusetts. Go to iranpledge.org to take the pledge!

MAPA Annual Meeting**Knowledge and Action**

Mass. Peace Action (MAPA)'s annual meeting, held in Newton on January 28, drew 80 members from across the state. As always, our focus was on knowledge and action; as we strengthen and expand our understanding of the critical peace and justice issues and opportunities we face, we also make plans for actions that can support a more peaceful world.

Our keynote speakers, **Judith LeBlanc** (*right*), Peace Action field director, and **Neta Crawford**, professor of Political Science and African American Studies at Boston University, provided a clear context and important perspectives for our work on moving the money and supporting a less militarized foreign policy.

Workshops followed on a range of action steps: electoral and candidate work, community organizing to move the money, strategies to stop a war on Iran, and making the media work for the peace community.

The Eastern Massachusetts 25% Campaign has merged into Massachusetts Peace Action, allowing us to closely coordinate our work.

Welcome to our New Board Members

Pat Salomon Monterey
John Maher Cambridge
Nancy Wrenn Newton
Prasannan Parthasarathi Newton

Members elected state-wide Board members -- including four incumbents (James Babson, Steven Brion-Meisels, Shelagh Foreman and Eva Moseley) and four new members (John Maher, Prasannan Parthasarathi, Patricia Salomon and Nancy Wrenn); four incumbents' terms carry over to the next election in January 2013 (Guntram Mueller, Angela Kelly, Matt Connolly and Carol Coakley).

Update from the National Office

As members of MAPA, we are also part of the nation's largest grassroots peace and justice network. Peace Action now has approximately 100,000 members in chapters or affiliates in every state of the nation. We are the descendant of SANE (founded in 1957) and the Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign (founded in Massachusetts in 1981). Together these groups played a key role in ending above-ground testing of nuclear weapons in 1963, opposing the Vietnam War in the 1960s and 70s, and ending the Cold War during the 1980s and 90s. Rep. Markey's bill to roll back nuclear weapons spending is called the SANE Act in tribute to our organization's role.

In the past decade we have continued to oppose military solutions to problems in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, and elsewhere. With your support, we are beginning to slow the growth of U.S. nuclear weapons, strengthen non-proliferation efforts, and "move the money" from military to civilian and environmental spending through legislation, lobbying and public education. We continue to advocate for a foreign policy based on cooperation and diplomacy rather than on military might.

Despite these accomplishments, the loss of a single major donor this past year has led to a significant budget shortfall in the national office. The loss of three staff members, all young leaders in the movement, must be reversed -- and we in the affiliate network can help. Please consider an emergency donation to national Peace Action -- and please check off our \$10 special contribution on your MAPA renewal coupon.

- Steven Brion-Meisels, Board Chair

**MASSACHUSETTS Peace Action**

is a nonprofit, nonpartisan grassroots organization building the sustained political power to foster a more just and peaceful U.S. foreign policy.

Our priority issues in 2012 are cutting the military budget to fund jobs, housing, health and the environment; ending the war in Afghanistan and preventing one with Iran; and abolishing nuclear weapons.

We are an affiliate of Peace Action, the nation's largest grassroots peace and justice organization. Our work is funded entirely by membership dues and donations from our members. Thank you for your support.

11 Garden Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
617-354-2169

info@masspeaceaction.org
www.masspeaceaction.org

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Pakistani-US Dialogue Exposes Stereotypes

Mass. Peace Action was one of several peace and justice groups to co-sponsor a Pakistan-US dialogue March 17 in Watertown with the Pakistani Association of Greater Boston and the Association of Pakistani Physicians of New England.

About 50 guests, approximately evenly divided between native Pakistani-Americans and others, heard Pakistani journalist **Beena Sarwar** and American journalist **Ethan Casey** discuss Pakistani-American relations.

Both speakers argued that the American stereotype of Pakistan is greatly confused. Pakistan is a large diverse country, largely



peaceful, though plagued by religious fundamentalism and military rule.

The underlying problem of underdevelopment has been exacerbated by U.S. aid to military elites, who have used their strength to take power from civilian politicians about once a decade during Pakistan's 60 years.

After dining on Punjabi dishes, the attendees vigorously debated the root causes of Pakistan's current difficulties, engaging with the speakers and with each other. Many present felt that education is Pakistan's greatest challenge. Several commented that Pakistan will be able to surge forward rapidly once the Afghanistan conflict is settled and tensions cool between Pakistan and India. Thanks to our hardworking member Rachel Williams of Groveland for organizing this event!

Berkshires

Occupy Berkshires and MAPA hosted a forum which drew over 75 people to Great Barrington on Jan. 30. Berkshires author Bill Shein and MAPA's Cole Harrison detailed how the cost of war and the high proportion (>58%) of our federal budget going to the military severely curtails the funds available for programs that serve domestic needs. This was especially important understanding for the Occupy movement, which seeks more economic justice and federal policies that serve the 99%, rather than the wealthy. — *Pat Salomon*

MetroWest

MetroWest Peace Action hosted a bird-dogging workshop by Martha Yager of AFSC. We practiced these skills at events for Elizabeth Warren, Joe Kennedy and others as we asked questions about reducing military spending, nuclear weapons and other peace issues.

Several of our members were elected as delegates to the Democratic State Convention in June. As part of our environmental coalition work, MWPA tabled at Natick and Framingham Earth Days and hosted the documentary *Scarred Lands, Wounded Lives* with Pax Christi in April.

— *Carol Coakley*

Peace Voter 2012

This year's elections in Massachusetts are bound to be exciting as Senator Brown is running for re-election after completing the last two years of Ted Kennedy's term in the Senate. Massachusetts is losing one Congressional District after the 2010 census, and two popular members of the House, John Olver and Barney Frank, are retiring.

Our goal during this election cycle is to keep issues related to peace, nuclear weapons abolition, reducing military spending, Afghanistan and Iran front and center and to provide information that will help voters make informed choices. Contact the office to arrange to attend candidate events and ask questions, to let candidates know our concerns and find out where they stand. We may also make some endorsements.

Only two Democratic candidates remain as challengers for Scott Brown's Senate seat, Elizabeth Warren and Marisa DeFranco. Peace Action met with Ms. DeFranco and with a staff member of Prof. Warren's. While Warren is progressive on economics, she has staked out centrist positions on foreign policy issues. Ms. DeFranco is closer to our positions.

Candidates for the open 4th Congressional District include Joseph Kennedy III(D), Herb Robinson(D), Marty Farren(D), Jules Levine(D), Sean Bielat(R) and Barbara Child(R). Rep. Richard Neal, an incumbent from Springfield, is being challenged by two Berkshires candidates, author Bill Shein (D) and state representative Andy Nuciforo (D).

St Patrick's Peace Parade

Some 1,500 people turned out in South Boston March 18 for the St. Patrick's Parade for Peace, Equality, Jobs, Social and Economic Justice.



This year's peace parade was a response to the denial by the Allied War Veterans Council of South Boston of the Veterans for Peace and LGBT rights organizations' request to join the traditional St. Patrick's Day Parade. This year's parade was two to three times bigger than last year's.

Peace groups present included South Boston Residents for Peace, Dorchester People for Peace, Peace Action Maine, the Peace Abbey, United for Justice with Peace, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Occupy Boston had a large contingent.

Catholic, Friends, UU, Baptist, and UCC congregations were present with their banners. The Leftist Marching Band provided terrific marching music.

— *Lara Hoke*

How Ordinary Women Ended Liberia's Civil War

Massachusetts Peace Action joined with the Cambridge Peace Commission, Congo Action Now, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to present *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* at Cambridge Public Library on March 29.

The gripping documentary tells the story of women's nonviolent struggle to end the Liberian civil war in 2003, as they first demanded that President Charles Taylor negotiate with the rebel coalition, then blockaded stalled peace talks in Ghana, insisting that delegates negotiate seriously.

Janet Johnson, a Liberian journalist who is featured in the film, spoke after the film and answered questions about the Liberian conflict. Johnson was an intern this spring at Massachusetts Peace Action while studying for her M.S. in international development studies at the University of Lowell.



The role of the United States in installing the brutal Taylor regime remains unclear. *The Boston Globe* reported in January 2012, on the basis of its Freedom of Information Act request, that Taylor had worked for the CIA for decades, but later retracted the story, saying the allegation was unproven. The horrors of the war may seem a thing of the past but Liberia as a nation is still grappling with its effects.

The current conflict in Congo bears many similarities to that in Liberia. In each case cut-throat competition for control of mineral resources led to breakdown of state control and warlordism, which disproportionately affected women. Congo Action Now is advocating for a Congo Conflict Minerals bill, which was introduced into the Massachusetts legislature as H3982 by State Rep. Martin Walsh. Please contact your state representative and ask him or her to support this important measure; go to congoactionnow.weebly.com for sample letters and more information.

Tax Day, April 17, 2012



Community, labor and peace groups are increasingly working together to prevent cuts in vital programs and cut the military instead.

Mass. Peace Action marked Tax Day, April 17, 2012 by protesting General Electric as a war profiteer and tax evader. GE made a profit of \$14 billion in 2010 but paid no taxes and got a \$3.2 billion refund; it then paid its CEO \$21.4 million. GE, a pillar of the military-industrial complex, builds fighter aircraft engines at its Lynn plant.

We then joined with MassUniting and Right To the City in a spirited 1500-person rally that snaked through the financial district with the message: "Corporations and the 1%: Pay Your Taxes! Fund Our Communities!"

Music for Peace

Saturday, June 2, 2012, 7:30 pm
Harvard-Epworth Methodist Church
1555 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge

VICTOR ROSENBAUM, piano
SERGEY ANTONOV, cello
LAURA BOSSERT, violin
PAULA MAIERFELD, viola

All Beethoven Program

Piano Sonata,
opus 109

Cello Sonata,
opus 69

Piano Quartet,
opus 16

Reception after
concert

\$40 donation to
benefit

Massachusetts Peace Action Education Fund.

Call 617-354-2169 or reserve online at
masspeaceaction.org.

